DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 799 FL 015 615

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TITLE Reservations About the Labovian Paradigm of Style Shifting and Its Extension to the Study of Interlanguage. Revised.
PUB DATE Sep 85
NOTE 31p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; *Interlanguage; Language Research; *Language Styles; Language Variation; *Linguistic Theory; Social Psychology; Sociolinguistics
IDENTIFIERS *Labov (William); *Speech Accommodation

ABSTRACT

An examination of the social psychological basis of style shifting suggests that, contrary to Labovian theory, many style shifts are not a function of shifts in attention to speech and that there are other more explanatory ways of analyzing style shifts. Some reasons for this view are: (1) attention to speech is sometimes negatively correlated with standardness or correctness; (2) style can be manifested in speech shifts that do not fall along the standardness or correctness dimensions; and (3) attention to speech is inadequate as an explanation for style shifting in most situations and can be causally unrelated to style shifting in either experimental or naturalistic situations. Four major categories of stylistic variation that do not fit the accommodation paradigm but complement it are grouped and referred to as "extravergence": interlanguage variation used as learning, communication, or performance strategies by second language speakers; systematic variation according to attention to speech; systematic variation according to linguistic environment; and systematic variation for other social psychological purposes, such as conforming to norms, negotiation, and self-expression. Six pages of references conclude the document. (MSE)

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ED268799

Revised: September 1985

RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE LABOVIAN PARADIGM OF STYLE SHIFTING AND ITS EXTENSION TO THE STUDY OF INTERLANGUAGE

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In this paper I propose the need to look at the social psychological basis of style shifting both in first and second language performance. The central thesis of the paper is that the Labovian paradigm of style shifting (in its original form and its extensions to second language [L2] data) is adequate to describe, let alone explain all style shifts. Labov claims that "styles can be ranged along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech" (1970:46). Although it might be true that they can be so ranged, we must ask whether this is a valuable exercise for first or second language researchers if their purposes are different from Labov's. In this paper, I wish to demonstrate that many style shifts are not a function of shifts in attention to speech and that there are other more explanatory ways of analyzing style shifts. If attention to speech is not a causal factor (which, it should be stated, Labov himself never explicitly claims), and if it does not always seem relevant in naturalistic or experimental settings, perhaps it is time to move beyond this descriptive principle and to build a broader sociolinguistic paradigm for systematic variation in first and second languages.

I propose that we look at the social psychological basis of style shifting. There is a vast literature on this subject which I shall not try to summarize since it extends far beyond the scope of this paper. However, I shall attempt to do three things: (1) present one social psychological approach--Speech Accommodation Theory--and briefly mention its limitations in scope; (2) express my reservations about the Labovian style shifting

paradigm and its extensions to L2 data, attempting to show how a social psychological approach might shed more light on the subject; and (3) propose the need for a new and broader sociolinguistic paradigm--one informed by social psychological approaches such as Speech Accommodation Theory--which attempts to explain why style shifting occurs and which classifies all types of systematic variation, not simply accommodation or variation according to attention to speech.

Before turning to the discussion of Speech Accommodation Theory, however, it is perhaps valuable to give the reader a sense of why a social psychological analysis of style shifting is viewed as so desirable. The main reason is that linguistic choices profoundly reflect personal and cultural identity assertion. This is true in L1 and L2 situations, but it is perhaps more poignantly true of second language data since L2 performance involves, by definition, an intergroup encounter which is interethnic and intercultural.

No formal linguistic study illustrates the influence of cultural identity assertion on second language performance as well as the story of Buwei Chao, a doctor, a cook, and the wife of a well-know linguist, Y.R. Chao. She is the author of a cookbook entitled "How to Cook and Eat in Chinese." In the Author's Note, Buwei Chao says she is ashamed to have written this book because she doesn't speak much English and writes even less. She explains that she cooked in Chinese, meaning that she spoke Chinese as she cooked, and had her daughter translate her words and actions into proper English. In the end, she rejected the correct English her

daughter laboriously wrote, and chose instead to write her recipes in Chinese English. So she called her dishes "Mushrooms Stir Shrimps," for example, rather than "Shrimps Stir-Fried with Mushrooms." Using her cookbook is an ethnolinguistic experience. Not only do many of her recipes come from her husband's linguistic informants on his dialect surveys of China, but she and her husband keep a running dialogue in footnotes about the wording of the text. What is most interesting, however, is that having the choice between grammatical standard English and Chinese-influenced English, she chose the Chinese English. She had to use English to sell her cookbook in America, but she made her feelings of ethnic identification shine throughout.

Speech Accommodation Theory

Howard Giles, the formulator of Speech Accommodation Theory, has proposed that speech shifts be viewed as accommodation--i.e., adjustments or modifications which make one's speech become either more similar or less similar to that of the interlocutor. When one's speech is adjusted to become more like that of the interlocutor, it is called convergence. As an example of this, Thais sometimes use English pronouns (pronounced /aay/ and /yuu/) in their Thai speech and use American retroflex continuant /r/ when speaking to Americans (Beebe 1974). When someone shifts away from the interlocutor, it is called divergence. We might say that Buwei Chao diverged intentionally from her English speaking audience. Speech maintenance, or refusal to converge, is also called divergence. American visitors frequently

report that French speakers in Belgium will maintain their French when addressed in Flemish, even if they are bilingual, and Flemish speakers will also maintain their language when addressed in French. Bilingual Canadians are also reported to choose maintenance over convergence in situations where they think their interlocutor should speak their language. Giles (1977) reports that an American monolingual English speaker in Montreal managed to get served in English at a gas station with French Canadian attendants as long as he had American license plates, but once the law forced him to get Quebec plates, the same attendants, who apparently thought he should be bilingual if he was Canadian, feigned non-comprehension of English, answering his request for gas in French. This incident represents divergence via native language maintenance. In second language dialects, however, maintenance takes the shape of an increased level of native language interference.

It is also possible for speakers to diverge from their interlocutor while intending to converge. Known as psychological convergence, this involves convergence toward a stereotype or expected norm (see Thakerer, Giles & Cheshere 1982, Beebe 1981). The process is illustrated by the famous joke about the Englishman who sat next to a Singaporean Chinese at a large banquet. He searched for a conversation topic to break the silence and asked, "likee soupee?" It turned out that the Singaporean was the keynote speaker and spoke beautiful RP English. When he came back to his table, he turned to the Englishman and asked, "likee speechee?" Clearly, the Englishman had converged toward an expected norm, not an actual one.

Speakers may also converge toward "significant others," who are not present, rather than their actual interlocutors. That is, one can converge toward one's reference group even though it is not present, thus in effect diverging from the interlocutor. Speakers may also converge toward a prestige norm that the interlocutor is believed to value, not necessarily to use. An incident reported in Beebe (1977b) could be reinterpreted as an example of this. My landlady in Thailand, while telling a story at the dinner table to her family and friends, changed all her standard /r/'s to /l/'s. On the average, Thais do this approximately 95% of the time in conversation (Beebe 1974). The landlady next turned to me and repeated the entire story, trilling all the standard Thai /r/'s in very formal style as if I were royalty, and hypercorrecting all the standard /l/'s (which Thais virtually always pronounce as /l/'s [Beebe 1974] to trilled /r̃/'s as well). Reinterpreting her behavior here as accommodation, we might say she was converging toward a prestige standard she believed I, the foreign linguist, used and valued. The same process that led her to adopt the prestige norm for the /r/ variables induced her to hypercorrect on the /l/ variable.

Giles describes convergence and divergence as being either upward or downward. For example, upward convergence occurs when a speaker converges toward an interlocutor who has higher status. If the interlocutor has lower status, and the speaker is converging toward him, we would call that downward convergence. Of the four possibilities--upward and downward convergence, and upward and downward divergence--upward convergence is the most common since it stems from the most widespread motivation. All human beings seek

the approval of others to some extent. And when the others have a higher status, seeking approval from them is even more likely to occur. Thus, upward convergence is more common than downward convergence. That is, we would expect the job seeker to converge toward the employer, rather than the employer toward the job seeker. If, however, jobs elsewhere were plentiful, and the applicant were especially well qualified, the employer might be more likely to converge toward the job seeker.

In formulating Speech Accommodation Theory, Giles initially drew upon four social psychological theories (see Giles and Smith 1979) to explain speech shifts: (1) Similarity Attraction, (2) Social Exchange, (3) Causal Attribution, and (4) Intergroup Distinctiveness. Similarity Attraction theory, attributed to Byrne (1969), posits that we are most attracted to those whose attitudes and beliefs are similar to ours. A corollary to this is that convergence toward others' behavior serves to gain their approval. Speech Accommodation Theory posits that we make our speech more similar to our interlocutor's speech in order to gain the interlocutor's approval. Natale (1975) found that the higher the speaker's need for social approval, the greater his convergence by paralinguistic means. Recently, a New York journalist observed an interesting example of convergence among three levels of the editorial staff at a popular magazine. The convergence occurred only in the direction that social approval was needed. The Senior Editor was not perceived to be converging in his speech toward anyone else. His Associate Editor, however, was found to converge toward the Senior Editor in his manner of laughing. He was also maintaining his accustomed level of

profanity. A recently hired female staff Editor who came from a religious midwestern family was found to be cursing profusely after only a few weeks under the supervision of the Associate Editor. Convergence was always in the direction that approval was sought.

The second social psychological theory that Giles drew upon is social exchange theory, developed by Homans (1961). It is based on the notion that people weigh the costs and rewards of their behavior and tend to choose a course of action that they believe maximizes the rewards and minimizes the costs. In the preceding examples the journalists converged in a direction which afforded them the greatest possible gains--i.e. toward the person who set their raises and edited their copy.

Causal attribution theory, the third social psychological theory (Heider 1958, Jones & Davis 1965, Kelly 1973), asserts that we perceive, interpret, and evaluate others' behavior in terms of motives and intentions we ascribe to them. We don't automatically conclude, for example, that a colleague who stays in his office until two every night is a dedicated scholar. We might decide he is having an affair. If someone offers to sell us a car for a song, we don't immediately decide that he is generous. Instead we wonder what's wrong with the car. Likewise, we attribute motives for convergence or non-convergence. Convergence is not always favorably received. Speakers of Black English report not liking it when whites try to sound like them. Foreign students sometimes react negatively to foreigner talk that patronizes them. Participants in counseling-learning workshops complain if the leaders' "understanding responses" are too imitative. In

all three cases, the motive for the speech shift is being questioned: the convergence is thought to be patronizing.

The fourth social psychological theory originally subsumed under the Speech Accommodation model is Tajfel's Intergroup Distinctiveness (see Giles & Smith 1979). It is generally used to explain speech divergence. Tajfel (1974, 1978) suggests that members of different social groups compare themselves on dimensions which they value. They search for dimensions which will show that they are positively distinct from the other group. Tajfel claims that this positive distinctiveness is necessary for the ingroup to feel it has adequately maintained its social and cultural identity. Tajfel predicts that in intergroup encounters where ethnic or other group membership becomes salient, the ingroup is likely to diverge from the outgroup. Ingroup members want to make their group appear distinct in a favorable way, and they can use language to emphasize the difference. The desire for intergroup distinctiveness seems to be central to the problem of non-assimilation. It is probably crucial to the understanding of nonlearning and fossilization in second language learning. Buwei Chao's insistence on "Mushrooms Stir Shrimps" seems to be motivated by a desire for intergroup distinctiveness and Chinese identity assertion. Although she decided to write a cookbook in English so that Americans could make Chinese food, it is obvious from the title of her book (<u>How to Cook and Eat in Chinese</u>) that she wanted Americans to have a Chinese experience. She wanted them to appreciate her group's distinctiveness on a strongly valued dimension.

Reservations About the Labovian Paradigm of Style Shifting And Its Extension To The Study of Interlanguage

For almost two decades, now, the predominant view of style shifting among sociolinguists and second language acquisition researchers alike has been the Labovian paradigm. Labov's view (1966, 1972) has been adopted for second language research by Dickerson (1974, 1975), Tarone (1979, 1982, 1984), and up to now, myself (Beebe 1980a). Labov admits that there are numerous styles and stylistic dimensions. Yet, he claims that "styles can be ranged along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech" (1970:46). Labov (1981) adds that he is not discussing a naturalistic analysis of style which might require a large number of dimensions. He never actually says shifts in attention to speech "cause" style shifting, yet his use of linguistic tasks which focus or divert attention in order to elicit styles do seem to imply cause. In any case, Labov is claiming that styles can be ordered along the single dimension of attention to speech. Dickerson (1974) and Tarone (1979) extend the claim to L2 styles; Beebe (1980a) assumes the validity of the paradigm; and Tarone (1984) specifically lists attention to speech as the cause of style shifting in interlanguage. It is the thesis of this paper that many style shifts are not the result of increased or decreased attention to speech--even shifts that could be elicited by Labov's own methodology.

Before providing data and arguments that support my counter contention, it is necessary to elaborate briefly on Labov's point of view. His methodology (1966) is based on manipulating the situation to elicit shifts in

speech style. For example, he manipulates verbal task, topic, interlocutor, setting, or participant roles. He claims that these affect attention to speech and that a shift in attention brings about a style shift. Verbal task is Labov's primary tool. He uses face-to-face interview conversation to elicit careful speech, the reading of passages to get his reading style, and the reading of words in citation form to generate his "listing" style. Sometimes Labov's casual speech is obtained outside the interview in, for example, an unanticipated telephone call from a close friend or relative. At other times, Labov uses the planned interview setting to deliberately ask questions that cause the subject to become somewhat emotional. Strong emotions are evoked by his famous "Danger of Death" question: "Have you ever been in a situation where you were in serious danger of being killed?" Labov's question not only evokes strong emotion; it challenges the speaker to justify feeling this emotion, making him or her feel that the answer had better be convincing. The resulting speech is in the vernacular--the casual but systematic style where Labov claims that the least amount of attention is paid to speech.

Labov's methodology was used in numerous studies in the 60's and 70's, first in his own research, then in replications elsewhere using native speakers (e.g. Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley 1967, Beebe 1974, Marshall 1979); and finally in studies of L2 learners (Dickerson 1974, Beebe 1980a). Dickerson (1974) extends Labov's claims for L1 to the L2 situation. She contends:

(1) "There are no single style speakers." (pp. 201-202)

(2) "The dimension of attention operates whether the language is native or nonnative." (p. 202)

(3) The style where there is the least amount of attention to speech is the vernacular. When attention is focussed on speech, we get the subordinate style. The vernacular is the most regular and systematic style. The superordinate is the least regular and systematic.

In three recent papers, Tarone (1979, 1982, 1984) has supported these contentions. Dickerson (1974) makes a fourth claim, however, that Tarone does not totally support. Dickerson makes a crucial analogy between standard or prestige variants in L1 and correct variants in L2. She claims:

(4) The superordinate (formal) style has more correct, target-like variants than the vernacular (casual) style.

Tarone (1982) cites evidence from Felix (1977), Gatbonton-Segalowitz (1975) and Beebe (1980a) to show that this is not always true. The formal style can display more native language interference and therefore lower correctness. Beebe (1980a) demonstrates that Thais transferred a strong social marker into their L2 listing style, making their formal superordinate style less, not more, correct. When the data did not involve a strong social marker in the native language, transfer did not occur, and the formal style became highly correct again.

In the Thai study (Beebe 1980a), I was interested in answering an important empirical question: Does the native language or the target language permeate the interlanguage in the formal style with conditions

for high attention paid to speech? I did not view the question as whether styles could or could not be ranged along the single dimension of attention to speech. I assumed that to be true. Therefore, I did not question whether attention to speech was the underlying principle in all style shifting. Now, I question it for L1, where attention to speech is said to lead to greater use of prestige or standard forms, and I question it in the L2 analogy, where attention to speech is said to lead to greater use of correct (i.e. TL) variants. In sum, my focus, now, is on questioning whether the principle of attention to speech should be said to underlie all style shifting.

The paradigm's use of the attention variable is questioned in part because, like consciousness, it is difficult to recognize, let alone measure (Dahl 1979). However, let us leave that worry aside for the purposes of this paper and assume the validity of Labov's methodology in manipulating attention to speech. This allows us to test it out against the data on its own terms.

Several concerns persist about the Labovian paradigm and its extensions for L2 data. First of all, the principle of attention to speech is descriptive, but very often not explanatory. Secondly, contradictory evidence exists as to whether it is a predictor of accuracy in L2 studies (Tarone 1979, 1982, Gatbonton-Segalowitz 1975, Felix 1977). Beebe (1980a) demonstrates that it sometimes leads to higher accuracy and sometimes to lower accuracy. There is questionable value in relying on a principle that leads to two opposite results. This is particularly true when it passes over

the social psychological dynamics of the situation, which seem to be the real basis for explanation.

The above concerns have led me to formulate three general reservations about Labov's claim that attention to speech is positively correlated in L1 with increased standardness, Dickerson's (1974) extension of the claim for L2, that it is positively correlated with increased correctness, and Tarone's (1984) view that it is the cause of style shifting in interlanguage. My reservations are:

(1) Attention to speech is sometimes negatively correlated with standardness or correctness;

(2) Style can be manifested in linguistic shifts that do not fall along the standardness or correctness dimensions;

(3) Attention to speech is inadequate as an explanation for style shifting in most situations. It can be causally unrelated to style shifting in experimental or naturalistic situations.

I shall discuss each reservation in turn.

Reservation One: Attention to speech is sometimes negatively correlated with standardness or correctness.

Attention to speech was negatively correlated with correctness in a study of nine Thais living in New York City (Beebe 1980a). The Thais transferred socially marked trilled [r̃]'s from Thai when speaking English into what Labov calls the formal listing style. The higher rate of interference on initial /r/ led to lower accuracy levels under conditions of attention focussed on speech. The Kiel project provided similar data.

Burmeister and Ufert (1980) showed that one child had greater L1 German interference on English verb phrase negation in a formal elicited context than in spontaneous conversation. It seems that greater attention to speech led to lower correctness. In this case, it was not, as in the Thai study, a case of a socially marked rule in the native language being the exception. We could not therefore say that high attention leads to low correctness only when the rule in the native language is socially marked. The native language may permeate the formal, elicited style when not socially marked. It seems to be the case that Dickerson (1974) was not totally accurate in claiming that higher attention will lead to higher correctness. Higher attention, as Tarone and I (Beebe 1980a) have suggested, can actually lead to either higher or lower correctness, with either the native language or the target language permeating the interlanguage.

Tarone and I are not taking identical positions, however. Tarone (1984) lists attention to speech as the cause of interlanguage style shifting. My current point of view is that we must focus on the many social psychological factors, such as those described in Speech Accommodation Theory, that regularly cause one to converge toward one's target language speaking interlocutor or to diverge from that interlocutor, converging instead toward one's own native language reference group. I think the explanation for style shifting is in the social psychological dynamics of the interaction--both on a personal and an intergroup level. Attention to speech is one of the many psycholinguistic factors we must consider, but it is not the single dimension that underlies all style shifting or causes it.

Reservation Two: Style can be manifested in speech shifts that do not fall along the standardness or correctness dimensions.

Shifts have been found in amount of talk, degree of elaboration, speech rate, duration, vocal intensity, pause and utterance length, stress, pitch, intonation, content expressed, and even complete code switches.

Beebe (1983b) in a study of bilingual Puerto Rican children in the New York area, found that the third graders shifted their amount of talk according to the ethnicity of the interviewer. In addition, they used a significantly higher number of T-units with a monolingual Anglo interviewer than with an English-dominant Hispanic interviewer. Amount of talk might be related to attention to speech (it is difficult to say), but it is not measurable on a standardness or a correctness scale. Still, it seems to be within the realm of stylistic choice. Ledvinka (1971) found that black job seekers used more language elaboration with black job interviewers than with white ones. In 1973, he found that they also transformed the content of what they said. Language elaboration and semantic content cannot be measured on a correctness continuum either. Webb (1970) found speech rates shifted according to the rates of the interviewer's speech. Earlier research by Ray and Webb (1966) showed that John F. Kennedy varied the length of his response to reporters at press conferences according to the length of their questions. Again, length is not a matter of standardness or correctness, though it is a matter of style. Lieberman (1967) found that babies shifted pitch between parents, using lower frequency babbling with their fathers than with their mothers. Natale (1975) found that those with a high need

for social approval shifted more toward a partner's vocal intensity or pause length than those with a low need for social approval.

There are dozens of similar studies showing shifts in everything from syntactic complexity to pitch on goo-goo's. None of the linguistic variables can be measured along a standardness or correctness continuum. Yet all of them demonstrate actual or psychological convergence toward the listener. The convergence-divergence paradigm describes the findings adequately. Similarity attraction theory goes far in explaining them. The need for the approval of others is known to make people try to be more similar to each other. Attention to speech and degree of correctness or standardness are irrelevant for these style shifts that occur within the context of one verbal task.

Reservation Three: Attention to speech is inadequate as an explanation for style shifting in most situations. It can be causally unrelated to style shifting in either experimental or naturalistic situations. Three groups of recent studies illustrate style shifting, but do not appear to involve attention as a causal variable. The first group of studies was done by sociolinguists. The studies discuss style shifts when interlocutor ethnicity is varied--possibly, but not necessarily, involving attention to speech as an underlying causal variable. If the psychological variable, attention to speech, is involved, we must still hypothesize that it is less important than social psychological variables in the interaction, such as feelings of ethnic identity and solidarity with one's ingroup. Ervin-Tripp (1968) found that Japanese women had more disruption of syntax

when speaking English to a Caucasian American as opposed to when speaking English to a Japanese interviewer. Their responses were also briefer and displayed more intrusion from native language Japanese vocabulary (1968: 204). Beebe (1977a) found that Chinese-Thai children had significantly more Chinese-sounding pronunciations when speaking Thai to an ethnic-Chinese Thai than when speaking Thai to an ethnic Thai. We could hypothesize that attention to speech is lower when speaking to someone of one's own race or ethnic group. While this might be true, other factors, such as feelings of ethnic identity and group solidarity, seem equally systematic and much more important.

The Chinese-Thai study also demonstrated that upper-middle class children shifted significantly more than their lower middle class counterparts according to the ethnicity of the interviewer. In the previously discussed Hispanic study of Puerto Rican children in New York (Beebe 1983b), where the subjects were all lower or lower-middle class, there was style shifting on some variables and not on others. Whereas there was a statistically significant level of style shifting according to interviewer ethnicity on the amount of talk variable, the children displayed virtually no style shifting on pronunciation variables, unlike the Chinese-Thai children. Accuracy rates on pronunciation variables were virtually identical with Hispanic and monolingual English speaking interviewers.

If attention to speech were the crucial variable, we would expect a shift from subjects of <u>all</u> social classes. The fact that upper middle class subjects shifted on all variables, but lower and lower-middle class

subjects in both Thai and New York studies did not shift significantly on pronunciation variables suggests that the explanation is social. That is, the causal variables must be social.

Goldstein and Mooney (1978) measured switching on a semantic variable according to interviewer ethnicity. Subjects indicated with nonverbal responses what their concept of "front" and "back" was with regard to objects in a field. With a black interviewer, they indicated preference for the deictic concept typical of West African languages. With a white interviewer, they indicated the concept typical of Standard American English. Since the testing instrument and the responses were nonverbal in both conditions, the attention to speech variable would seem to have been unimportant. Yet a shift occurred. The social context would likely be a more important factor in the situation. Psychological convergence appears to be operating.

A second group of recent studies has helped convince me that attention to speech is frequently not the causal variable, and not even the most salient variable, in style shifting. These studies, initiated by social psychologists of language rather than sociolinguists, involve style shifts in response to a verbal threat to ethnic identity. They include one in Wales (Bourhis and Giles 1977), one in Belgium (Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, and Tajfel 1979).

Bourhis and Giles (1977) conducted the first one on native English-speaking Welsh subjects in southern Wales. The subjects were learning Welsh, the language of the ingroup, as a second language. They were interviewed

in English. As an initial neutral question, they were asked to give their impressions of the various language learning techniques they had been exposed to. Then they were asked an ethnically threatening question where the experimenter said things like: "even in the boardrooms of . . . your own education departments, it is being said that Welsh is dying, why can't you leave it alon?" The experimenter said Welsh had "one foot in the grave" and was "on the slippery slope of extinction." Then subjects were asked to give their opinion about the survival and status of Welsh. A crucial factor in Welsh ethnic identity had been attacked by a Standard RP English-speaking outsider.

If Labov's view is applicable, we would expect to find a higher level of standard RP accent in response to the language classroom techniques question, where attention would presumably be focussed on speech for the analysis. We would expect to find a stronger Welsh accent in response to the ethnically threatening question since, presumably, Labov would argue that attention is diverted away from speech by such an emotionally-based question. This was exactly what happened, but with only half the subjects. The opposite occurred with the other half. Those who had <u>integrative</u> motivation for learning Welsh (i.e., wanted "to become more familiar with their cultural heritage as national group members") increased their Welsh accents in English in response to the threatening question. Those who had instrumental motivation (i.e., were trying "to further their immediate individual career prospects") decreased their Welsh accents when asked the ethnically threatening question. Thus, while we can speculate about attention to speech, and even gain some insight from

this, we give up a rich social psychological interpretation if we focus on this exclusively. It seems preferable to look for the overall patterning of human behavior where everything--from the shoes we buy to the accent we speak--is determined by our social psychological state, our ethnic and other group memberships. Attention to speech is a given here and in all linguistic interactions. It is always more or less operative. But is it explanatory? If we need concrete situational factors to gauge it and social psychological theories to explain it, what good is it?

Another similar study leads me to question whether attention to speech is always useful, let alone explanatory, in understanding style shifting. Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, and Tajfel (1979) studied the Belgian context--a situation even more explosive than the one in Wales. Using the same procedure of asking a neutral question and then an ethnically threatening question, the researchers looked to see how Flemish-speaking Belgians would react to a French-speaking Belgian interviewer. The study was conducted in English, the second language of all involved. The L1 Flemish speakers stopped speaking English and code-switched into Flemish more frequently in response to the ethnically threatening question than in response to the neutral question. No one made the L2 English sound more Flemish. Perhaps this was because they knew the interviewer could speak Flemish and would understand them. They had no need to mark their English. Nevertheless, we have a condition that should divert attention away from speech. The question is emotionally charged and anxiety producing. In this case, we get code-switching--a switch to the native language, not to a vernacular style

of the interlanguage. One could, of course, argue that the L1 is the vernacular language in relation to the L2, so the shift is toward the vernacular, as Labov predicts. Again, the attention to speech continuum seems descriptively useful. Nevertheless, it does not help explain why in the Welsh study the L2 sound system and lexicon permeated the L1, but in the Belgian study, the L1 replaced the L2. It is probably not an accident that in both cases, the language that the subjects identified with ethnically was the one that got stronger, and it got stronger when the ethnic group's language was put down by an outsider. These patterns in language behavior seem to be unrelated to attention to speech, yet they are consistently related to the principles of intergroup distinctiveness and identity negotiation.

A third set of studies leads me to say that attention to speech does not explain style shifting. This is a series of studies conducted by Thakerar (Thakerar 1980, Thakerar, Giles, and Cheshire 1982). Noticing a gap in the social psychological literature on speech shifts, Thakerar focussed on interactions between people of unequal status--nurses at various levels of experience, achievement, and official status. Working cooperatively toward a mutual goal, nurses of higher status slowed down and made their speech less standard. The nurses of lower status correspondingly spoke faster and made their speech more standard. Additional tests indicated that they thought they were converging toward each other. In reality, their style shifts were toward a stereotype--an expected norm--not an actual norm. The degree of change for the high and low status interlocutors was

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almost the same, but the direction of change was opposite. There is no reason to think that attention to speech is the underlying principle here. Actual status of the participants and relative expertise on the topics introduced were the major variables. Besides, if attention to speech were operative here, we would have to claim that it had opposite effects on higher and lower status speakers interacting with each other. It would not corroborate Labov's (1970, 1981), Dickerson's (1974), or Tarone's (1979) claims about shift toward the vernacular. Instead, it leads us to look even more seriously at social psychological explanations for style shifts.

Extravergence: Systematic Variation Outside the Accommodation Paradigm

Speech Accommodation Theory is of great value to us in research on style shifting. It is a powerful social psychological theory which allows us to explain, not simply describe, a great deal of the systematic variation that occurs in speech. Not all patterned variation, however, can be explained or even be best described as Speech Accommodation (Beebe and Giles 1984). Beebe (1983a) suggests that there are at least four major categories of stylistic variation which do not fit the accommodation paradigm. These are being referred to as "extravergence" to emphasize the point that all four of them cut across the horizontal axis of convergence versus divergence. Extravergence represents variation which cannot or should not be described as converging toward or diverging from an interlocutor. (Most variation can be described as convergence or divergence on

a simple descriptive linguistic level, but it is proposed here that other paradigms are more appropriate if the underlying psychological motivation for the shift is not accommodation.) Extravergence is a cover term proposed for variation which is not motivated by the social psychological principles underlying accommodation. In many cases it represents variation which is inaccurately or inadequately described by other yardsticks, as well, such as correctness, standardness or prestigiousness.

Beebe (1983a) suggests that extravergence be recognized as the complement to accommodation. The following four categories of extravergence are proposed: (1) interlanguage (IL) variation used as learning, communication, or performance strategies by L2 speakers in their second language; (2) systematic variation according to attention to speech; (3) systematic variation according to linguistic environment; and (4) systematic variation for other social psychological purposes, such as conforming to norms, negotiation, and self-expression. Most likely all of these categories could be correlated either to accommodation (Giles's explanation for style shifting) or to attention to speech (Labov's correlate for style shifting). But the purpose of this category is to identify variations due to other causes.

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